

The
**THOREAU
SOCIETY**
BULLETIN

BULLETIN FIFTY-SEVEN

FALL, 1956

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE . . .

In September your secretary accepted a position as associate professor in the English Department at the State University Teachers College in Geneseo, New York, and is now happily settled down there. He hopes that any members of the society who are visiting in or passing through the vicinity (Geneseo is thirty miles south of Rochester) will consider this a standing invitation to drop in and at least say, "Hello."

A "LOST" THOREAU JOURNAL "FOUND" . . .

As all Thoreau scholars know, the thirty-eight volumes of the original manuscript of Thoreau's journal upon which the standard text is based have since 1909 resided in the Pierpont Morgan Library at 29 East 36th Street in New York City. But headlines were made early in October when the Morgan Library announced that it had acquired a thirty-ninth volume, covering the period from July 30, 1840 to January 22, 1841, and containing material not included in the standard edition of the published journals.

The existence of this volume has been known for many years. It was owned at one time by the great collector of Americana Stephen H. Wakeman and is described in the catalog of the sale of his collection (Item 982) as containing 16,800 words. It was purchased at the Wakeman Sale in 1924 by a private collector and has not been generally available to scholars, although Prof. Canby was permitted to examine it when he wrote his biography of Thoreau in 1939. Now, though, it will be available to qualified scholars, although no plans for its publication have as yet been made. It should be added that this volume was available to H.G.O. Blake when he edited his four-volume selection of excerpts from the journals and so portions of the text are contained therein.

To celebrate the acquisition of the volume, the Morgan Library is sponsoring an exhibition for the months of October and November, entitled "Thoreau and His America," when for the first time the entire series of manuscripts of the journals, plus many other rare pieces of Thoreauviana, are being put on view to the general public for the first time.

JACK LONDON AND THOREAUWH

Harvey Deal, reference librarian at the University of Virginia, has called my attention to an amusing piece of Thoreauviana that has somehow escaped the notice of Thoreau students for many years. It is a short story by Jack London, the title-story in his volume *THE NIGHT-BORN* (New York: Century, 1913, pp. 3-29). The essence of the tale is this: A girl of eighteen married the owner of a restaurant in Juneau, Alaska, during the gold rush. He put her to work cooking the meals and washing the dishes.

But one day she ran across a torn newspaper clipping quoting a passage from Thoreau about the "night-born." [Although London doesn't identify it, it is from the "Sunday" chapter of *A WEEK*.] It inspired her to abandon her husband and run off into the wilderness where she was adopted as queen by a tribe of Indians and lived in perfect happiness, except for one thing: "There are times when I wish most awful bad for that Thoreau man to happen along ... so as I could marry him. I do get mighty lonesome at spells." (p. 24)

The Thoreau Society is happy to welcome into being the new *WALT WHITMAN NEWSLETTER*. Copies may be obtained free of charge from Prof. William White, Dept. of Journalism, Wayne Univ., Detroit 1, Mich.

THOREAU IN MINNESOTA

We are indebted to Mr. William Cummings of St. Paul, Minnesota, for obtaining for our use a photostatic copy of the accompanying article "A Week on the Frontier," from the *MINNEAPOLIS STATE ATLAS* for July 3, 1861. This little-known article gives a vivid contemporary account of the visit which Thoreau made to the Sioux Indians in Minnesota in the last year of his life.



"Central Park South isn't Walden Pond, Bub."

Drawing by F. B. Modell
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A WEEK ON THE FRONTIER

STEAMER FRANK STEELE,
Minnesota River, June 22.

MR. EDITOR:—With an excursion party of about 200 Minnesotians, I am just returning from a visit to see the Sioux tribe of Indians at their annual council at Red Wood, a trading post on the head waters of the Minnesota. I want to tell your readers something of our trip.

RESOLVES.

—Some of the solemn wags aboard have just held an enthusiastic meeting on the hurricane deck and adopted, with numerous "hi! hi!s," the following:

Resolved, That we have had a high old time.

Resolved, That it is 'a big thing' and we can 'see it.'

Resolved, That Capt. J. R. Hatcher is a brick of the first water, and is hereby tendered the freedom of the river.

Resolved, That Gov. Monger, Chief of the Gra Twoston Band, is a 'gay and festive cuss'tomer, and we joyfully recommend him and his followers to the favor of everybody and his wife and children.

Resolved, That judging from our experience, the Minnesota river is always on a boulder. Long may she Wave!

Resolved, That while admiring the beauty, we also commiserate the condition, of "Lowe—the poor Indian" whom we have heard so much about, and his whole family, and that we will send them each a pair of suspenders, a standing collar and a green cotton umbrella.

—*Quantum suff!*—"not any more, I thank you."

—But I am certain that this is the sentiment of the party in the rough.

THE PARTY.

We had a very choice and select company, among whom were Gov. and Mrs. Ramsey, District Att'y Nourse, Speaker Benson, U. S. Marshal Buck, Commissioner Cox, Deputies Brackett and Cleveland, Horace Mann, Jun., son of the lamented statesman, Samuel May, Esq., Henry D. Thoreau, Esq. the celebrated abolitionist, &c.—there being about 25 or 30 ladies. It is very rarely that an excursion party is assembled combining such a degree of sociability, refinement, intelligence and culture as this. It was, in fact, composed mainly of the *crème de la crème*—the rich yellow skim from the mottled milk of frontier society. In all the trip, I heard hardly one profane or boisterous word, and did not see one rude loafer, nor one tipsy man. Vanity Fair and the sickish social pictures of Howadji were dimly represented. Old Potaphier was not there—nor Mrs. Gunn, nor Carrie Petticoes, all bonnet and no brains. Rev. Cream Cheese joined us, but he did not return. Gauche Boosey and Doestick's friend, D. Phool, were around, but they looked subdued, and although the bar was on one side of the boat, she didn't capsize, nor careen visibly in the river.

We had, also, an intolerable fellow—call him Flip—who bored us with idiotic puns, a philosopher who startled us with sharp paradoxes, and four well behaved Cockneys who asked if "Hinglishmen are hoften seen hup so far has 'ere.'"

"A CUT DIRECT."

On our up trip, several of us went ashore at Traverse de Sioux, and walked across the neck of a peninsula to St. Peter, the river making a circuit of five or six miles to accomplish a mile direct. On our way we were captured by Judge Hlandran, who awaited us in ambush, and conducted us to his mansion, where we were shown the thermometer at 103° in the shade and then put through a course of very grateful hospitalities. Thanks for the bend in the river! May we some time meet the Judge on a pilgrimage near our "castle."

ST. PETER.

This town has a fine location and a wide awake people. It seems rather given to diffusiveness, but the reveille of Trade will soon rally the scattered houses together. It has had the benefit of German's big Legislative advertising puff of '56-'7, and generally of live newspapers. It has some resources not immediately perceptible to the stranger, that will give it a momentum by-and-by.

MANKATO.

Mankato is a fine town—has, I think, the healthiest past, the best present and the biggest future of any on the river, beyond all comparison. Here we were met by "a large and appreciative audience," and everybody seemed comfortable and confident. There is no place in the interior that has such such a vast tributary country and such numerous local sources of prosperity as this.

AC.

Judging from our river-view, the towns on the Minnesota, like those along the Mississippi, have yet to learn the art of centralization. Everybody's corner lot wrestles for the commercial centre. The freight house and the best hotel are *in medias res*,—the local aristocrats,—and the common, weather-beaten members of the burgh stand wretchedly apart, like poor relations—always repelled, but never quite out of sight. In some places the houses hang along the bluff like bird-cages, and in others they straggle all over the prairie as if they were a flock of lonesome sheep, creeping down the slope to drink.

ROBBING AROUND.

The river especially above South Bend, is distressingly crooked. It is as crooked as the rail worm fence which the pig crawled through into a cornfield, and was astonished and ashamed to find himself still on the outside! Sometimes we go six to fifteen miles to achieve one, and so frequent and aggravated are the oxbows that we pass every house on four sides at least—giving numerous fronts and no rear views. Thus the country has the appearance of being quite thickly settled. New Ulm is in sight from a steamboat deck for 25 miles of river. "The wind," said John B., "must 'ave a hexceeding 'ard time blowin' down 'ere." If it succeeds, it should certainly have the poetical pronunciation. And D. Phool advanced the theory that the river was made

so crooked because "inland navigation is valuable and it is desirable to have as much as possible." And the execrable Flip, provoked at the absence of a visible star-spangled banner, said when the Frank Steele struck the bank in a short angle of the river, that he "never knew a boat to have so much bunting and so little flag!" The speech was unnecessary.

NEW ULM.

New Ulm is a very thriving town and shows life. We saw more enthusiasm and heard more patriotic exclamations there than at any other town on the river—and have no doubt the inhabitants drink gunpowder tea and eat hot muster-rolls for breakfast. Wide-awake Young Kiefer of St. Paul was there getting up a company.

AT RED WOOD.

At 9 o'clock on Thursday we arrived at Red Wood. The few trading houses that constitute the town are on a very high bluff above the river, up which our party toiled, under the broiling sun. Flip said "this is a warm climate"—but nobody took any notice of him.

Indians were flocking in from the country, the men armed with bows, war-clubs and quivers full of arrows, and the women carrying the papposes, the camp equipage and few commissary goods. Many of the weapons and long pipes of red stone fell into the hands of their guests during the day, who gave them Kosh-poppo in return. At one o'clock a council was held under the north side of the missionary's house. Gov. Ramsey, Superintendent Thompson and Agent Galbraith occupying and speaking from chairs, while the bands were assembled in knots on the ground.

SPEECHES OF FALE FATH.

The Superintendent spoke first, saying that he had been appointed by the Great Father at Washington, to look after their interests, and those of all the Red men of the State. He would try to do it faithfully. They marked the periods of the interpreter only with a stupid grunt of approbation—something like "oo!"

Gov. Ramsey followed, saying he was glad to see so many whom he had seen ten years before, when they were under his care. ("oo!") That the Great Father has a fort a short distance from there, where he was sending soldiers, not to harm or menace them, but as a token of respect for their Great Sioux nation, and to protect them against bad white men. (A universal "oo!") [Good! That is what is needed—bombard the whiskey-sellers.—REP.]

Agent Galbraith concluded, at some length, saying that he was sent to look after the interests of this nation only; that he intended to protect them and give them justice, and care for them as a father should care for his children. ("oo!")

SPEECH OF RED OWL.

Then Red Owl—a Sioux brave, and orator—standing, responded. He first asked for an interpreter from his own tribe, but it being refused, he continued. His style

o. speaking was peculiarly sharp and vehement. He enunciated earnestly, and gesticulated fiercely and vigorously. His complaints were many and bitter. Said they had been promised all these things before, and had been cheated out of them. The property that had been promised and, he believed, sent them by the Government, had somehow not reached them. They gave their lands to the Great Father at Washington and were promised \$10 to \$20 a year apiece, and \$5,000 worth of property a year, for fifty years, but the money has been stolen or lost, somehow, and they had not had more than enough to cover the nakedness of the women and children. While the whites, and especially the great Father, whom they saw before them, had full round faces, and looked as if they had not suffered from want, and had fine clothes, his tribe was ragged, and he himself was now so hungry and faint that he was scarcely able to stand up to represent his people. The \$5,000 worth of goods are paid for with their money, and yet had been taken by the late Agent to a distant part of the country, that did not belong to them, for storage, and much had not been returned, and he feared they would never see it. They wanted a store-house of their own, where the goods cannot slip through any body's fingers! He did not want their property scattered about the State, or carted off to another tribe to be returned in small parcels or not at all. He complained loudly of their former Agent, Brown. He hardly had been there at all, this year, but would come sometimes at night and go away before daylight in the morning. He also complained that the large sum (\$150,000, we think) appropriated for the education of his tribe, had all been used up in building the score of worthless little one story houses in the vicinity.

He seemed to feel what he said, very keenly; and his impassioned speech contrasted very favorably with much on the American hustings. But his tattooed hearers made no demonstration except the mechanical grunt, and seemed utterly passive and indifferent to the eloquent appeal for their tribe.

After the council they were presented with two beavers, one by the Governor and one by the visitors.

THE MONKEY DANCE.

Then, at request, the men retired a mile from town and made their toilet for the "Monkey dance." They painted their faces all colors accessible, and all styles imaginable, dressed themselves in ribbons and fancy articles, colored furs &c., with heads and arms trimmed with feathers, and returned, forming themselves in a circle and dancing around the drummers, with wild gestures and incantations. Their dance was a kind of regular jerking hop, and the notes of the songs rarely varied through half an octave. "Yah! yah! —ho! yah!" was its burden.

CIVILIZATION.

Can Indians be civilized? We found many of these with hair cut short, and

wearing comfortable farming clothes, and on the levee were half a hundred new plows, exposed to the weather, rusting and going to pieces—the farmers having nobody to teach them. It seem to me we are making a sad mistake—beginning the wrong way to civilize them. We station missionaries here and there along the retreating fringe of wigwams—earnest and excellent men—who preach to their dark-skinned companions about their sins. But the painted warrior looks with contempt on the pale preacher, and will not listen to his gospel. Why? Because it conflicts with all his views of life's necessities—because it forgets the wants of to-day. "It may save my soul, as you say," he makes answer to the exhorting missionary, "but it will *not* save my *body*, and that is my greatest need just now. It may give me peace with the Great Spirit, when I pass beyond the dark waters of the Gitchee Gumee, but I'm cold, I'm hungry, and what's going to become of me *this* side of Jordan, I should like to know!" The dark-skinned son of the woods is right. He speaks the language of the human nature. He talks like a very philosopher. Now suppose we change our policy a little, and instead of exhorting him to believe in the Savior of the world as a primal and fundamental thing, first teach him how to keep soul and body together. It seems to me that the Sioux and Chippewas need plows and a hand to teach them how to guide them, more than they need bibles and commentaries; that they need tools and live-stock and garden seeds vastly more than they need meeting-houses and psalm-books. First, give the Red Man lessons in practical industry; teach him how to use the plow and hoe, how to plant and how to harvest, in short, how to feed and clothe himself, quicker, easier and better than he ever knew before; then you ply him with tracts and some of your spiritual teaching may stick to him. But the steamer Pioneer, pawing along up the Mississippi, freighted to the guards with powder and profanity, yellow ochre, stinking tobacco and whisky of the devil's distilling, with two meek missionaries singing psalms in the stern cabin, will hardly bring the millennium to the Ojibway. If, instead of sending religion and rum, we had conveyed the implements and means to learn the glorious "arts of peace," we might create upon the granite sterility of his nature a genial soil, and grow therein the rough, sweet fruits of independence, if not the fair flowers of learning and culture. It is the coulter's gleam that sends civilization like a shaft of light across the continent; it is industrial energy that is the blessed handmaid of Religion everywhere, that prepares the way, and leads it on to noble and enduring victories.

If they can be civilized and Christianized, it will not be by showing them "how to die," but by teaching them how *not* to die. And here we come face to the original question "Can they be civil-

ized?" I am sure I don't know. John B. says "wet a hexibition them ud make in Lunnun!" And D. Phool says "I tell you, they're run into the ground—Injuns be. They won't never come to anything. What's the use sending them gold and spellin' books and calico? Look at them legs! They've run their race—that's what's the matter. I think all the Injuns in America ought to be put in bags and throwed into the river—like superfluous cats. They're played out." I think the young person is severe.

GOT THE NEWS!

We had been six days without the news—it was Friday, and we had none since that dated the Saturday before. Think of our condition! Imagine being beyond the radius of newspapers for a week in such eventful times! The sleep that Dutch Rip had in his galligaskins, on that old Hudson hillside, was the briefest nap, compared with our nervous dream. Even a common, flat telegraphic lie would have been a most grateful morsel. At last I jumped ashore again at Mankato, and a good-looking man who seemed to have a quick comprehension of our condition, ran for a paper. He brought the *Press* of the two preceding days, bearing the address of "Tourtellette & Pitcher." Thanks to them! Then the passengers gathered in gaping knots, to hear whether Congress had concluded to hold its July session at St. Cloud or Portland; whether the floating battery was bombarding Boston; whether Ross Winans and Portugal Harvey had yet been offered seats in the Cabinet; and other rumors which were vigorously debated when we left.

BURLESQUE.

I must not forget to mention the burlesque Indian council and monkey dance, which the boys produced on the way down. R. C. Mungor, of the band above mentioned, personated the Governor, increasing his corporosity with a pillow-appliance under the vest. The "Injuns" arrayed in moccasins, and quilts borrowed from the state-rooms, and armed with their bows and arrows, performed their part to a charm, and of course the witty "Governor,"—bogus as Sibley in '58,—was ludicrous to the last degree. He told his children that several hundred soldiers had been sent to the Fort, not to protect the frontier against them at all, but as a token of great respect and admiration, and to give the fighting-men a chance to hunt and fish among them, and enjoy their cultivated and refined society. (Ugh!)—Not half so many have been sent to the vulgar Chippewas. (Ugh!) Your great father at Washington, he continued, has also resolved to give you ten thousand dollars and a white squaw apiece every Fourth-of-July, (ugh!) and Nassau street tracts for all your children. (Groan.)—It also gives me pleasure to state that South Carolina has been set apart to your tribe for a reservation, and you can henceforth occupy it as a perpetual hunting ground. (Ugh!) (And so on to the end.) Wagner appeared as Red Owl, and

it was the opinion that he out Indianed the original "orator." The monkey-janece was a raro and side-splitting Terpsichorean feat.

—And here, much as remains to say, I must close, only advising everybody to take the same trip, in the same month, when they can do it under the administration of Capt. Hatcher and his good Clerks.
W. A. C.

NOTES AND QUERIES . . .

Rutgers University is sponsoring a series of lectures on American authors entitled "Pioneers of Prose & Poetry" over Station WATV (Channel 13) on Sunday afternoons at 1:30 p.m., with Frederick T. McGill, Associate Professor of English, as the speaker. On October 28th, the program was devoted to the works of Thoreau.

The cost of printing this bulletin was covered by the life membership of Robert R. Miller of Bristol, R.I. Life membership in the society is \$25.00.

Doctoral dissertations announced as in progress at the moment include one by Wade C. Thompson at Columbia University on "The Aesthetic of Henry David Thoreau," and one by Karl Joachim Zwansig at the Freie Universitat in Berlin on "Thoreau als Kritiker der Gesellschaft."

In the last bulletin we announced that Prof. Kenneth Robinson's paper on "Thoreau and the Wild Appetite," which was read at the annual meeting in Concord, would be included in this bulletin. We now wish to announce that plans are being formulated to print the address as a separate pamphlet. We will announce further details of this plan later.

Christopher McKee of Houston, Tex., writes that he will have an article on Thoreau's 1839 visit to the White Mountains appearing in the December, 1956, issue of APPALACHIA. We have seen advance proofs of the article and know that it contains much new information on that journey.

In our review in the spring issue of the bulletin of Henry Beetle Hough's THOREAU OF WALDEN, we chided him for stating that Thoreau went to Walden to establish a station on the underground railroad. In a recent letter to us, Mr. Hough has pointed out that instead he pointed out that that was one of the erroneous explanations made by other critics. We wish therefore to withdraw that criticism and express our sincere apologies to Mr. Hough for our error.

Edwin Way Teale writes to tell us of an amusing letter he has received:

RFD #1

Columbia, Tennessee

Thoreau, Henry David
Dodd, Mead and Company
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

In our biology class we have been studying a unit on "Life in the Woods." I am trying to get some information on this subject. We would appreciate it very much if you could give us some information or posters on this unit.

Thank you.

The letter was addressed to "Mr. Thoreau, Henry Davis, C/o Edwin Way Teale, Dodd, Mead & Company, New York, N.Y."

ADDITIONS TO THE THOREAU BIBLIOGRAPHY..WH

Broderick, John C. "Bronson Alcott's 'Concord Book.'" NEW ENGLAND QUARTERLY, XXIX (Sept. 1956), 365-380. On Alcott's plans for a never-published book on Concord which was to have included selections from Thoreau.

C[alhoun], H[erbert]. HENRY DAVID THOREAU 1817-1862 AND HIS AMERICA. New York: Morgan Library, 1956. 4pp. Prospectus for the exhibition.

Carman, Bernard R. "Thoreau on Greylock" BERKSHIRE EAGLE (Pittsfield, Mass.). July 11, 1956. p. 18. Account of Thoreau's visit to the Mass. mountain.

CONCORD ENTERPRISE. "Thoreau Admirers Meet at Concord." July 19, 1956. Account of annual meeting.

Hansen, Harry. "Morgan Library Dusts Off Thoreau." CHICAGO TRIBUNE MAGAZINE OF BOOKS. Oct. 14, 1956. p. 8. Account of exhibition.

Hough, Henry Beetle. THOREAU OF WALDEN. Review by R[obert] L. W[heeler]. PROVIDENCE SUNDAY JOURNAL. May 13, 1956.

Jaffee, Irving. "Thoreau Exhibit." NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE. Oct. 8, 1956. On Morgan Library exhibit.

LOWELL SUN. "At Thoreau Society Meeting" July 19, 1956. Account of annual meet.

Mills, Edgar M. "Greater Walden Pond Area Slated." CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. Aug. 4, 1956. p. 1. (Map on p.2). Announces further enlargement of the state reservation.

Milne, Gordon. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS AND THE GENTEEL TRADITION. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press., 1956. 294pp. Comments on Thoreau's friendship and editorial dealings with Curtis, *passim*.

Murray, Donald. "The Sage of Walden." SPIRAL (New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn, N.Y.). Jan. 1956. pp. 34-35. Impressionistic account of visit to Walden.

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Valenti, Jack. "He Sat by a Pond, His Words Tilted Planet." HOUSTON POST. Aug. 18, 1956. Appreciative essay.

We are indebted to the following for information used in this bulletin: R.Adams, H.Adel, F.Babcock, T.Bailey, A.Ballou, K.Cameron, J.Cooley, J.Haynes, C.Hoagland, J.Kennedy, N.Lehrman, A.Lownes, C.McKee, G.Megathlin, D.Murray, R.Needham, R.Schaedle, R.Stowell, S.Thomas. Please notify the secretary of new Thoreau items or ones that he has missed.

The Thoreau Society Inc. is an informal organization of students and followers of Henry David Thoreau. Its bulletins are issued quarterly; its booklets, occasionally. Annual meetings are held in Concord each July. Officers of the society are Howard Zahniser, Hyattsville, Md.; president; Mrs. Herbert Hosmer, Concord, Mass., vice-president; and Walter Harding, secretary-treasurer. Annual membership in the society is one dollar; life membership, \$25. Communications concerning membership or publications should be addressed to the secretary

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